Congress of the United States of America
House of Representatives

Vernon J. Ehlers

Improve Science Education

Michigan

Support K-12 Science, Math, Engineering & Technology Education Reform

April 20, 2000

Dear Colleague,

As outlined in *Unlocking Our Future: Towards A New National Science Policy*, the science policy report adopted by the House on September 24th, 1998, our science and technology enterprise has the ultimate goal of improving the lives, health, and freedom of all peoples. Our country's scientific strength is at the heart of our recent economic boom and undergirds our national defense. In so many ways, America depends on science.

However, a preponderance of evidence indicates that our schools aren't preparing our students adequately for the knowledge-based, technologically rich America of today and tomorrow. Without a strong supply of scientists, engineers, technologically competent workers, and scientifically literate consumers and voters, the future well being of America is in jeopardy.

I am offering three bills to address this situation.

- H.R. 4271, the **National Science Education Act**, which, among other things, directs the National Science Foundation to set up a program of master K-8 elementary teachers to mentor and train their peers in hands-on, inquiry-oriented, concept-based instruction. This bill also establishes a working group of scientists and educators to investigate the ideal scope, sequence, and content of curricula in our country.

- H.R. 4272, the **National Science Education Enhancement Act**, which, among other things, sets up meaningful professional development for science and math teachers through rigorous summer institutes.

- H.R. 4273, the **National Science Education Incentive Act**, which, among other things, provides tax credits to beginning science and math teachers with strong content preparation and tax incentives to businesses who provide assistance to local schools to help with science, mathematics, engineering and technology training.

If you would like to sign on as a cosponsor or would like more information about these bills, please contact Michael Lach or Jodi DeWitte in my office at x5-3831. Additional information is also available on my web-site at: www.house.gov/ehlers/issues/science/.

Sincerely,

Vernon J. Ehlers
Member of Congress

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Science Committee | Transportation and Infrastructure Committee | House Administration Committee
Education and the Workforce Committee

National Science Education Act

- √ Provides funds for Master Teachers who, through professional development and support for utilization of hands-on inquiry materials, will lead groups of science, math, engineering or technology teachers in grades K-8.

- √ Encourages private sector contributions to and involvement with the information technology programs in the neediest high schools.

- √ Strengthens the use of technology in the classroom by investigating what techniques and methods are most effective.

- √ Supports teachers with a program for professional development in technology use and integration.

- √ Promotes private sector involvement in science, math, engineering and technology education by linking participants with each other and distributing best practices.

- √ Bolsters rural educational opportunities by encouraging distance learning components to science, math, technology and engineering education programs.

- √ Increases teachers' access to cutting-edge education programs by posting NSF-sponsored programs on the NSF Internet web site.

National Science Education Enhancement Act

- √ Reinforces the induction process by providing mentors to novice teachers.

- √ Supports teachers through quality summer professional development programs.

- √ Upgrades the capabilities of teachers by providing needed technology training instructional materials.

- √ Benefits college students by allowing Work-Study credit for training or tutoring K-12 teachers to use technology in the classroom.

National Science Education Incentive Act

- √ Eases the financial burden for new science, math, engineering and technology K-12 teachers by providing a tax credit to help pay off student loans.

- √ Spurs private sector contributions of science, math, engineering and technology equipment.

- √ Enlarges students' access to workforce training by encouraging the private sector to provide instruction in grades K-12.

- √ Affords teachers learning opportunities and practical experience through Externships.

- √ Augments availability of practical professional development for teachers with access to workforce training.